

# Assessment Approach

Dr. Hunt

# Areas of Assessment

- Basic
- Medical record
- Urgent
- Symptom
- Disease
- Symptom-based condition

# The Basic Assessment

- Initial record review
- Medical history & psychosocial assessment
- Review of systems
- Physical & mental status examinations
- Routine testing

# Medical Record Assessment

- Most unexplained symptoms have been previously assessed
- Careful record review can...
  - prevent unnecessary diagnostic testing
  - improve understanding of course & impact

# Urgent Condition Assessment

Examples from the guideline...

- Suicidal ideation or psychosis
- Objective evidence of joint swelling
- Fever
- Significant weight loss
- Focal neurological examination findings
- Severe anemia

# Symptom Assessment

- Duration
- Onset
- Location
- Co-morbidity
- Previous episodes
- Intensity and impact
- Previous treatment
- Past medical, surgical, and psychosocial history
- Patient perceptions & beliefs

# Pain Intensity

“On a 0 to 10 scale, 0 being no pain and 10 being pain as bad as you can imagine what number would you say your pain has been over the past week?”

# Symptoms Besides Pain

“On a 0 to 10 scale, 0 being no symptoms and 10 being symptoms as bad as you can imagine what number would you say your symptoms have been over the past week?”



# Symptom Impact

“During the past week, how much have your symptoms interfered with your usual work or activities, 0 being ‘does not interfere at all’ and 10 being ‘completely interferes’”

# Disease Assessment

- Mood disorders
- Anxiety disorders
- Substance use disorders
- Sleep apnea or other sleep disorder
- Multisystem diseases (e.g., MS, MG, rheumatologic)

# Symptom-Based Condition Assessment

- Chronic multisymptom illness
- Chronic fatigue syndrome
- Fibromyalgia

# Chronic Multisymptom Illness

- Two or more of the following
  - Widespread pain
  - Persistent fatigue (not transient tiredness)
  - Cognitive dysfunction (forgetfulness, memory disturbance, problems with concentration)
- Often various associated symptoms
- Associated disability

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